

## Patient Safety Awareness Week

March 12 – 18, 2023 is Patient Safety Awareness Week! Everyone interacts with the healthcare system at some point in life. High-quality, safe health care is a team effort, and as a patient, you play an important role. Here are some tips to help you focus on health and safety and make the most of your next healthcare provider visit:

- Bring all your prescription drugs; over-the-counter meds; vitamins, herbs, and supplements; drops, creams, patches, and inhalers; and testing or self-monitoring supplies. If bringing them is not possible, keep a list of your medications and the dosage.
- Inform staff about your allergies.
- Clean your hands and remind others to clean theirs too. Don't hesitate to remind your healthcare providers to clean their hands and wear gloves.
- Bring a family member/friend as your advocate.
- Speak up if you have questions or concerns. If you get an answer and still don't understand, ask again.
- If your provider has an online patient portal, sign up to access test results, discharge instructions, and more.

For additional information on quality and patient safety, including tools for comparing doctors and hospitals, visit SBO's [Choosing the Right Care](#) page.



## Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month

March is Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month. Colorectal cancer is a leading cause of cancer-related deaths in the United States. The good news is it is preventable. If you are 45 years or older, have a family history of colorectal cancer, or have other risk factors, talk with your Primary Care Provider (PCP), about when to begin screening, which test is right for you, and how often to get tested. Most preventive care is covered in-network at 100% of the allowable charge. Learn more about covered screenings on SBO's [Cancer Resources](#) page.

## National Kidney Month

March is National Kidney Month. It is estimated that nearly 37 million U.S. adults have Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD); of those people, 90% may not even know they have it. CKD symptoms may not appear until the final stages, when patients need dialysis or a kidney transplant. Regular physical exams can help identify CKD early. Imagine receiving a call from your doctor after a routine physical telling you they reviewed your blood work and suspect you may have kidney failure. Your doctor states that your blood work revealed that your creatine levels are high, and your kidney function is low. This life-saving blood test is one way your doctor can detect kidney failure early on. Diabetes and high blood pressure are two of the main causes of CKD. The good news is that when detected early, there are things you can do to improve your health:

- Schedule your yearly physical and ask about your kidney function.
- Reduce your red meat consumption by 1 – 2 servings a week.
- Reduce your fast-food meals.
- Reduce the number of sugary drinks you consume.
- Eat more vegetables and fruits.
- Choose water as your main beverage.

For more information, visit [National Kidney Foundation](#).

## State Employee Benefits Committee (SEBC) Corner

At the February meetings, the Subcommittees continued to evaluate options to solve the FY24 projected deficit. The SEBC reviewed financials and [FY24 planning considerations](#). The SEBC voted to adopt and implement the [PrudentRx](#) program, a solution for managing specialty pharmacy spending, effective July 1, 2023 for State of Delaware non-Medicare health plan members.

SEBC and Subcommittee meetings are open to the public and include an opportunity for public comment. Visit the [SEBC page](#) for meeting information and more.

## Diabetes Awareness

Diabetes prevention and management are important areas of focus for the State of Delaware. Prolonged high blood sugar levels can cause serious damage to organ systems and be life-threatening. The good news is type 2 diabetes is preventable. The State of Delaware and the State Employee Benefits Committee are committed to offering convenient, evidence-based programs to help members stay healthy. Employees, pensioners, and covered dependents (age 18 or older) enrolled in a Highmark Delaware or Aetna health plan that meet the [program eligibility criteria](#) can enroll in the Diabetes Prevention Program. Not sure if you are prediabetic? Take the [Prediabetes Risk Test](#). If it is determined that you are at risk, there are steps you can take to manage your health. For more information, visit SBO's [Diabetes Resources](#) page.

## Upcoming Webinars

**Aetna** offers monthly [webinars](#) that employees, pensioners, and their family members can attend, regardless of enrollment in a State health plan. There is no need to register; simply click the link below to attend.

- Mindful Meditation – [3/6 @ 5pm](#)
- Getting Organized – [3/30 @ 12pm](#)

**ComPsych® GuidanceResources®** offers webinars that employees, pensioners, and their family members can attend, regardless of enrollment in a State health plan. Click on the links below to register:

- Running on E: Adding Energy and Passion to Your Work and Life – [3/15 @ 10am](#) & [3/23 @ 5pm](#)

**Delta Dental** offers [webinars](#) addressing good oral health that employees, pensioners, and their family members can attend, regardless of enrollment in a Delta Dental plan.

- Oral Health and Wellness – [3/8 @ 2pm](#)

The webinars above will be recorded and posted to the website if you are unable to attend.

## Did You Know?

Did you know that you may be eligible for discounted pet insurance? Many of us have a pet that we love dearly. But taking them to the vet can leave us feeling the pinch in our wallet. The good news is you can save money on your vet bills with pet insurance through the following:

- [Highmark Delaware members](#) can save up to 10% on monthly insurance plans and up to 70% on their pet's medications.
- [Aetna members](#) have access to discounts on pet insurance through the LifeMart® discount program.
- [ComPsych® GuidanceResources®](#) offers discounts through Nationwide for pet insurance.

These programs can change, and we encourage members to log in to the vendor member portals for the applicable benefits periodically to see all discounts available.



## Shamrock Shake

Ingredients:

- ¾ cup of Fairlife Milk
- 2 scoops of Halo Mint Chocolate Chip Ice Cream
- 1 scoop of Vanilla Protein (no carbs)
- 1 tablespoon of sugar-free dark chocolate chips
- 1 handful of ice cubes
- 6 drops of green food coloring (optional)
- 1 – 2 drops of Peppermint Extract (optional)
- Whipped Cream (optional)

Directions:

1. Mix the first five ingredients (plus optional food coloring and extract) in a blender.
2. Blend well.
3. Serve with whipped cream and additional chocolate chips.

Recipe adapted from [The Diet Chef](#).

**Hidden Treasures:** Go to the Choosing the Right Care page on SBO's website and find "SurgeryPlus Options." Then, find the financial incentive amount for a knee replacement. Send your answer to [sbo.communications@delaware.gov](mailto:sbo.communications@delaware.gov) (Subject: Hidden Treasures). A random drawing from all correct responses received by the end of the month will be conducted for a prize. Congratulations to last month's winner, Tami S. from the Delaware Military Academy!